

RIVERSIDE CITY CHARTER

ARTICLE II. GENERAL POWERS OF CITY.

Sec. 200. Generally.

The City shall have the power to make and enforce all laws and regulations in respect to municipal affairs, subject only to such restrictions and limitations as may be provided in this Charter and in the Constitution of the State of California. It shall also have the power to exercise, or act pursuant to any and all rights, powers, privileges or procedures, heretofore or hereafter established, granted or prescribed by any law of the State, by this Charter, or by other lawful authority, or which a municipal corporation might or could exercise, or act pursuant to, under the Constitution of the State of California. The enumeration in this Charter of any particular power shall not be held to be exclusive of, or any limitation upon, the generality of the foregoing provisions.

Sec. 201. Access to public meetings and public records.

City agencies, boards, commissions, committees, officials, staff and officers, including the Mayor and members of the City Council, exist to conduct the people's business. It is fundamental that the people have full access to information, not to just what decisions have been made in their name but how those decisions were reached and how they were deliberated. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created. The people do not give their agencies or public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know.

Our values lie in a government that helps its citizens in a timely way to obtain information. Our values lie in a broadening base of public participation, involvement and interest, providing new ideas and energy.

Our values lie not in hiding embarrassment and unpleasant occurrences. Our values lie not in preventing dissent.

To carry out the purposes set forth in this section, the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950 et seq.) and the Public Records Act (California Government Code Section 6250 et seq.) shall apply to the City Council, and any commission, committee, board or other body created by Charter, ordinance, resolution or formal action of the City Council, or the Mayor.

Special circumstances dictate that there must be exceptions to access. But those exceptions should be narrowly drawn and narrowly exercised. Public employees must be protected from unwarranted invasions of privacy while the public's right to fundamental information must be protected. Citizen right to privacy must be protected with the knowledge that involvement in government matters necessarily reduces an expectation of privacy.

In general, the value of access should be given a strong presumption of public benefit. (Effective 1/18/2005)

Sec. 202. Adoption of ethics code.

The City of Riverside shall adopt a Code of Ethics and Conduct for elected officials and members of appointed boards, commissions, and committees to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. The City Council shall adopt the Code of Ethics and Conduct by ordinance or resolution within six months of the effective date of this Charter section. (Effective 1/18/2005)